

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement drawing sheet makes changes to Fig. 2 and replaces the original sheet with Figs. 1 and 2.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 1, 2 and 5 are amended and claims 7-11 are added. Accordingly, claims 1-11 are pending in this application. No new matter is added.

The Office Action objects to the drawings because Fig. 2 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art--. The attached replacement sheet makes the required change to Fig. 2. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as indefinite for lack of sufficient antecedent basis for "the printing section." Claim 1 is amended to change "printing section" to "printing unit" to provide proper antecedent basis. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-4 is respectfully requested.

Claims 5-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,685,471 to Taubenberger. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 5 recites *inter alia* "a frictionally transporting section configured to frictionally transport the continuous paper in a first direction, the frictionally transporting section including a back feeding unit configured to feed back the continuous paper in a second opposite direction by a pre-determined amount after completion of printing." It is respectfully submitted that Taubenberger fails to disclose, teach or suggest these features.

These features were previously recited in original claim 2. Although the Office Action rejects claim 2 over Taubenberger and U.S. Patent No. 6,592,276 to Ohba et al. (Ohba), the Office Action fails to address the recited feature of a back feeding unit.

The two friction rollers 13 of Taubenberger, alleged to correspond to the frictionally transporting section recited in the claims, does not include a back feeding as recited in claim 5. Although Fig. 1 of Taubenberger illustrates bi-directional rotation of one of the rollers, there is no disclosure whatsoever of the two friction rollers 13 of Taubenberger performing a back feeding by a pre-determined amount after completion of printing.

Independent claim 5 further recites *inter alia* "a buffer unit provided between the paper-position restricting section and the frictionally transporting section and configured to come into contact with a surface of the continuous paper when the continuous paper is feeding back." It is respectfully submitted that Taubenberger also fails to disclose, teach or suggest these features.

The Office Action does not address the buffer unit recited in claim 5. Apparently, the Office Action may consider the festoon device 10 of Taubenberger to correspond to the recited buffer unit. However, the festoon device 10 of Taubenberger is not configured to come into contact with a surface of the continuous paper when the continuous paper is feeding back, as recited in claim 5.

As described in column 4, lines 8-19 of Taubenberger, the festoon device 10 is a mechanical web accumulator. The festoon device 10 has two fixed rollers and one oscillating roller. The oscillating roller is moved counter to a spring while in contact with the paper web A to hold the paper web A under a constant tension. Thus, the oscillating roller is always in contact with the paper web A and is not configured to come into contact with a surface of the continuous paper when the continuous paper is feeding back.

As described in the specification, the buffer unit is spaced apart from the continuous paper during the printing operation and only comes into contact with the continuous paper during back feeding. This may lead to various advantages such as those described on pages 12 and 13.

In fact, the specification specifically teaches that such a conventional mechanical accumulator, required in prior art apparatus, is not required because of the buffer unit recited in claim 5. See the first full paragraph on page 13 of the specification.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Taubenberger fails to disclose, teach or suggest each and every feature recited in independent claim 5. Thus, claim 5 is patentable

over Taubenberger. Claim 6 is also patentable over Taubenberger at least in view of its dependence on claim 5, as well as for the additional features it recites. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Taubenberger is respectfully requested.

As best understood by Applicants, claims 1, 2 and 4 are rejected, alternatively, under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Taubenberger or under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Taubenberger in view of Ohba. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 recites *inter alia* "a frictionally transporting section configured to frictionally transport the continuous paper in a first direction, the frictionally transporting section including a back feeding unit configured to feed back the continuous paper in a second opposite direction by a pre-determined amount after completion of printing" and "a buffer unit provided between the paper-position restricting section and the frictionally transporting section and configured to come into contact with a surface of the continuous paper when the continuous paper is feeding back." As discussed above with respect to independent claim 5, Taubenberger fails to disclose, teach or suggest these features.

Dependent claim 2 further recites a pushing-out-amount controlling unit configured to control an amount of push out by the pushing-out member in correspondence with an amount of the feeding back by the frictionally transporting section. The Office Action fails to address this recited feature.

Although the Office Action refers to "the pushing-out member" of Taubenberger, the Office Action fails to identify the element(s) of Taubenberger that arguably correspond to the pushing-out member recited in claim 2. Applicants assume that part of the festoon device 10 of Taubenberger is considered to correspond to the pushing-out member, namely, the oscillating roller.

The oscillating roller of Taubenberger is continuously biased against the paper web A by a spring (Fig. 1; col. 4, lns. 8-19). The spring cannot reasonably be considered to be a controlling unit. As shown in Fig. 1, the spring is fixed to a stationary support to provide a predetermined force that cannot be controlled. As such, there is no pushing-out-amount controlling unit in the festoon device 10 of Taubenberger.

The "pushing-out" of the oscillating roller in the festoon device 10 of Taubenberger is based entirely on the spring and provide an approximately constant tension in the paper web A over the entire working range of the festoon device 10. As such, an amount of push out by the pushing-out member is not controlled in correspondence with an amount of the feeding back by the frictionally transporting section, as recited in claim 2.

Thus, Taubenberger also fails to disclose, teach or suggest the additional features recited in claim 2.

Therefore, the rejection of independent claim 1 and dependent claims 2 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Taubenberger is improper and should be withdrawn.

Ohba is cited only as teaching locating a printing section downstream of feed rollers of a paper transporting mechanism. As such, it is respectfully submitted that Ohba does not remedy the deficiencies discussed above with respect to Taubenberger. Accordingly, in view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 2 and 4 are patentable over any permissible combination of Taubenberger and Ohba.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1, 2 and 4 over Taubenberger alone and Taubenberger in combination with Ohba is respectfully requested.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Taubenberger in view of Ohba, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,603,800 to Focke et al. (Focke). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Focke is cited only as teaching spaced apart rollers 33, 34. As such, it is respectfully submitted that Focke does not remedy the deficiencies of Taubenberger and Ohba discussed above with respect to claims 1 and 2. Thus, while Applicants respectfully disagree that Focke teaches that the looping rollers 33 and the counter rollers 34 are spaced apart so that the web is fed in a straight line as asserted by the Office Action, as these rollers do not keep the web in a straight line, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 3 is patentable over the asserted combination of Taubenberger, Ohba and Focke as least in view of the patentability of claims 1 and 2 from which it depends. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 3 over Taubenberger, Ohba and Focke is respectfully requested.

New claims 7-10 are patentable over the applied references at least in view of the patentability of claims 1 and 5 from which they depend, as well as for the additional features they recite. New independent claim 11 is patentable over the applied references for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-11 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:KLK/jfb

Attachment:
Replacement Sheet

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